

FROM THE BOARDROOM TO THE COURTROOM:
MONSANTO CORPORATE INFLUENCE AND LIABILITIES

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the Monsanto Company's corporate public affairs and government relations strategies to understand current litigation on Roundup's carcinogenic effects. The research analyzes previously confidential internal company documents from The Monsanto Company Archives and recently released federal court litigation documents known as The Monsanto Papers to trace corporate influence. This research examines Monsanto's strategy to influence scientific information, regulatory bodies, public opinion, and the university partnerships that served as a major liability for the company in contemporary court cases. Monsanto's ghost-writing and regulatory body manipulation practices for the commercialization of biotechnology products such as Roundup serve as a vital case study for both businesses and consumers.

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

Introduction

Dewayne Anthony Lee Johnson lived a healthy life in Vallejo, California. He worked as an integrated pest manager at a local school. Lee's day to day tasks consisted of catching wildlife on the grounds, addressing irrigation issues, and other necessary maintenance work. One of his other crucial job responsibilities was spraying herbicides around the school to manage weed growth in the lawn. One day, the sprayer he used to disperse Roundup, a Monsanto herbicide, broke and he was drenched in the chemical product. He immediately washed the liquid off and resumed working on the school grounds.¹

Soon lesions developed across Lee's body: on his lips, across his face, and all over his arms and legs. Lee immediately went to the doctor's office, and after a multitude of tests and referrals, he got the ill-fated news of his cancer diagnosis. Lee's mind immediately went to his regular usage of Roundup. After several failed attempts to contact the Monsanto Company for answers, Lee filed a lawsuit against the company in 2014 for causing his deadly form of non-Hodgkin lymphoma.²

Lee's lawsuit argued that Monsanto knew, or should have known, the harmful effects of the main active ingredient in Roundup, glyphosate, and contended the company suppressed research about the dangerous effects of glyphosate and Roundup.³ In August 2018, a San Francisco state jury unanimously found that Monsanto failed to warn of Roundup's carcinogenic dangers. In the official jury verdict form, the jury answered "Yes" to whether Monsanto knew, or

¹ Carey Gillam, "I Won a Historic Lawsuit, But May Not Live to Get the Money," *Time*, (November 21, 2018).

² *Ibid.*

³ "First Monsanto Roundup Trial Starts in June 2018 in San Francisco," Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.baumhedlundlaw.com/first-monsanto-roundup-trial-june-18/>.

should have reasonably known, that Roundup was dangerous and if Monsanto failed to warn consumers of the dangers.⁴ Evidence from the trial revealed the unethical ghost-writing of scientific papers to assert the safety of Monsanto products, plans to discredit regulatory agency findings naming glyphosate a probable human carcinogen, and numerous other unethical attempts to influence regulatory bodies.

A key deciding factor for the jury in the trial was Monsanto's influence on the scientific community to propel biotechnology and Roundup commercialization. Judge Curtis Karnow made it clear in his order before the trial that jurors consider not only what caused Johnson's cancer, but also whether Monsanto concealed evidence of risks in its pesticide products.⁵ The judge's order stated that "the internal correspondence noted by Johnson could support a jury finding that Monsanto has long been aware of the risk that its glyphosate-based herbicides are carcinogenic...but has continuously sought to influence the scientific literature to prevent its internal concerns from reaching the public sphere and to bolster its defenses in product liability actions."⁶ Monsanto's corporate strategy to shape scientific literature influenced the jury in its decision, and revealed how the company's flawed strategy presented a major liability in its defense in the courtroom.

The jury awarded Lee \$289 million as reparations for the pesticide's health effects. In October 2018, the court cut reparations to \$78 million. Later, in November 2018, Monsanto appealed to overturn the decision and grant a new trial, but thousands of other individuals already filed cases against Monsanto.⁷ The plaintiffs argue, similar to Lee, that Monsanto's

⁴ "Johnson vs. Monsanto Verdict Form," Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.baumhedlundlaw.com/pdf/monsanto-documents/johnson-trial/Johnson-vs-Monsanto-Verdict-Form.pdf>.

⁵ "Judge's order in Johnson Case ahead of trial", U.S. Right to Know, May, 17, 2018, last modified March 24, 2020, <https://usrtk.org/monsanto-papers/state-court/>.

⁶ Ibid., 45.

⁷ Carey Gillam, "I Won a Historic Lawsuit, But May Not Live to Get the Money," *Time*, (November 21, 2018).

herbicides are not safe, the company was aware of dangers, and Monsanto took steps to conceal information from regulators and the public.⁸ As of December 2019, approximately 42,700 people have filed suits against the Monsanto Company.⁹

Lee's trial was in a state court, and the most recent development in his proceedings has been a counter appeal by Lee in response to the Monsanto appeal. Another state case, Pilliod v. Monsanto, in May 2019, resulted in a verdict of \$2 billion in damages, but was later cut to a total of \$87 million.¹⁰ There are more state court dates scheduled in 2020 and 2021. On the federal level, the plaintiffs have also had success. The March 2019 case of Hardeman v. Monsanto resulted in the jury finding that Roundup was a "substantial factor" in the development of Hardeman's cancer, and returned a verdict of \$80 million in damages, that the court later reduced to approximately \$25 million.¹¹ The next federal court case, as of this writing, is scheduled for May 2020.¹²

How did this happen to a leading agricultural and biotechnology producer such as Monsanto? This research's goal is to demonstrate how the practices found in the Monsanto Roundup trials are a part of a larger corporate strategy of government relations and influence at the Monsanto company, ultimately leading to blurring the lines of regulators and other government oversight agencies. This research also investigates the relationship and influence between Monsanto and educational institutions. The breakdown between the regulated and the regulators by the Monsanto Company ultimately posed a liability to the business, evidenced by the numerous trials and jury's decisions against Monsanto. This research will utilize the

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ "Monsanto Roundup Trial Tracker," U.S. Right to Know, last modified February 26, 2020, <https://usrtk.org/monsanto-roundup-trial-tracker-index/>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

Monsanto Company's deep history and current legal battles as a historical and contemporary case to serve as a powerful example for businesspeople, corporations, and educators, on ethical government relations and corporate influence.

This research will first start with an in-depth literature review to provide context to current academic literature and valuable scientific journals on the subject. The hypothesis then follows, with a thorough overview of the research methodology. A systematic analysis into released Monsanto legal documents from the trial follows to provide further context for the contemporary narrative. Utilizing Monsanto Company Records at Washington University in St. Louis Special Collection Archives, a history of the Monsanto government relations department is traced, along with corporate public affairs and media relations, as a way to influence public opinion, scientific communities, and regulatory bodies for the commercialization of biotechnology. The research continues with an overview of Monsanto university relations history, methods, and initiatives.

Literature Review and Situation Analysis

The literature review is broken up according to various subcategories to give a broad context to the current research as follows: Monsanto Company background, agricultural and biotechnology industry context, and scientific publications. This research is unique among current literature through its use of recently released legal documents, known as the Monsanto Papers, in combination with company archival documents from the 1950s to the 1980s, to trace Monsanto corporate influence. The research utilized both contemporary and historical sources to demonstrate how the Monsanto Company systematically influenced regulatory bodies, scientific communities, and public opinion for years to shape its biotechnology commercialization.

However, as demonstrated in contemporary court cases, the influence and regulatory breakdown shaped the court rulings and revealed the flawed corporate strategy.

The Monsanto Company Background

Carey Gillam's *Whitewash: The Story of a Weed Killer, Cancer, and the Corruption of Science* is the seminal text on how Monsanto's Roundup came to dominate the farming industry and described the various environmental and health concerns that have arisen. Gillam, an environmental investigative journalist, recounted the financial incentives in place to keep using glyphosate and depicts how the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and numerous scientific journals engaged in corruption and deception that has allowed agricultural and chemical executives to put tremendous pressure on regulatory agencies. This pressure often resulted in altered regulations that negatively affected the consumers and citizens the institutions were sworn to protect. Through her work, Gillam set the stage for this research by providing a background on Monsanto and an analysis of the current issues the company faces. This research extends her work, through a focus on government relations, a topic she touches on, but not through an additional historical and university relations approach.¹³

Leemon McHenry, a bioethicist and lecturer at California State University - Northridge, penned an article that laid a solid foundation for this research. McHenry examined de-classified files from Monsanto that were used in toxic tort litigation to investigate the impact of Monsanto's efforts to influence scientific studies on glyphosate and Roundup. McHenry examined 141 recently released documents from the Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman law

¹³ Carey Gillam, *Whitewash: The Story of a Weed Killer, Cancer, and the Corruption of Science* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2017).

firm. After careful review, the author concluded that the documents revealed Monsanto-sponsored ghost-writing of articles, peer review corruption, and other influences used to defend Monsanto's products. McHenry made a point to mention that he could not weigh in on the carcinogenic effects of glyphosate, but mentioned that if Monsanto were confident in its products, there would be no need to go to such lengths to conceal details about the materials used in its products. McHenry concluded that much of the science surrounding Roundup has been artificially financed by Monsanto to advance its own interests.¹⁴ The research added to McHenry's findings through an additional analysis of The Monsanto Papers, with added archival sources to historically trace the findings.

The Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman law firm, which represents many clients suing Monsanto, uncovered The Monsanto Papers through court discovery measures. Specifically, many of the lawsuits attempt to link Roundup to causing non-Hodgkin lymphoma. The documents were obtained through legal discovery and include internal Monsanto emails, text messages, company reports, studies, and other documents. On March 13, 2017, US District Judge Vince Chhabria unsealed the documents obtained by plaintiffs in the Monsanto Roundup multidistrict litigation. Another group of documents was made public on August 1, 2017. Ultimately, the 141 released files were an invaluable source of primary data as a way to investigate Monsanto ghost-writing, scientific alterations, and corporate influence. The documents are categorized according to charts and are in chronological order, which served as a valuable source for this research.¹⁵

¹⁴ Leemon B. McHenry, "The Monsanto Papers: Poisoning the Scientific Well," *International Journal of Risk & Safety in Medicine* 29, no. 3/4 (January 2018): 193–205.

¹⁵ "Monsanto Papers Secret Documents," Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman, accessed March 2, 2020, <https://www.baumhedlundlaw.com/toxic-tort-law/monsanto-roundup-lawsuit/monsanto-secret-documents/>.

Agricultural and Biotechnology Industry Context

Business Communications Company (BCC) Research is a public relations and marketing firm that publishes market research reports annually, which have provided vital industry background to this research. Their 2018 report provided background on Monsanto and predictions of the future of the agricultural and biotechnology industry. From 2013-2017 the “global pesticide and other agricultural chemicals market grew” from \$125.3 billion to \$161.9 billion, citing emerging markets in China and Brazil as the main drivers.¹⁶ Experts predict the industry to grow to \$224.6 billion in 2021.¹⁷ Key predicted drivers of this are general economic growth and increased demand for food products, while restraints include concern about the effects on the environment. The report specifically mentioned that using agricultural chemicals “may cause serious health risks to humans.”¹⁸ Additionally, the report stated that in September 2016, Bayer AG, a German drug and chemical maker, announced its intent to acquire Monsanto with sale completion in June 2018, which reinforced Bayer’s dominant position in the marketplace.¹⁹

The March 2017 BCC Research report gave additional company insights, predictions, and chemical company backgrounds. The biotechnology seed segment made up the largest share of the market, with an estimated size of \$24.8 billion, and was forecasted to reach about \$38.8 billion by 2022.²⁰ Increasing worldwide food demand, a drive for higher agricultural yields, a growing number of countries that allow biotech crops, and the development of innovative

¹⁶ “Pesticide And Other Agricultural Chemicals Market Global Briefing 2018,” The Business Research Company (Publisher), (January 2018): 7-8. <https://www-bccresearch-com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/epublish/index/market-briefs%20details/mbreport/AR~Hu62CTA==>.

¹⁷ Ibid., 9.

¹⁸ Ibid., 10.

¹⁹ Ibid., 19-20.

²⁰ “Agricultural Biotechnology: Emerging Technologies and Global Markets,” TBRC (Publisher), (Mar 2017): 30, <https://www-bccresearch-com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/market-research/biotechnology/agricultural-biotechnology-markets-report-bio100c.html>.

biotechnology tools are the fundamental driving forces for the growth of agricultural biotechnology industry.²¹

Bayer AG is one of the world's largest chemical and healthcare companies. Bayer AG's three business segments are Healthcare, Covestro, and Crop Science. Bayer AG specializes in producing genetically modified seeds in production sites outside of Europe.²² The Monsanto Company develops genetic materials for seed companies and produces herbicides. Monsanto's two central business units are agricultural productivity, and seeds and genomics. Agricultural productivity is the smaller portion, making up 26 percent of 2016 revenues, but includes the Roundup and glyphosate products.²³ The principal strategy for Monsanto is its expansion to non-US countries such as Mexico, Canada, Argentina, and Brazil. The BCC literature provided important business context and depicted the immense impact and power that Monsanto, through the products and chemicals it created, had and continues to have on millions of consumers around the world. The widespread impact was essential to understand the scope of the unethical historical and contemporary business practices.

Scientific Publications

Charles Benbrook, former Washington State University professor and agricultural economist, authored research on the significance of the glyphosate chemical and its effect on millions of people. The author concluded that from 1974 to 2016, farmers and other users applied over 1.6 billion kilograms of glyphosate in the United States. Since the Roundup-ready crop introduction in 1996, the chemical's usage has increased fifteenfold. Additionally, the

²¹ Ibid., 101.

²² Ibid., 175.

²³ Ibid., 198.

author pointed out that a majority of glyphosate applied in the US was applied in the last ten years. The introduction of genetically modified crops to work with glyphosate has increased the chemical's usage. Glyphosate will remain the most used herbicide worldwide for years to come, and as a result, will lead to prolonged environmental and health effects. Benbrook's article set the stage for the importance of this research, as the findings show the tremendous global impact of both Roundup and Monsanto.²⁴

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is an intergovernmental agency forming part of the World Health Organization (WHO) of the United Nations. Its role is to conduct and coordinate research into the causes of cancer. The organization also collects and publishes surveillance data regarding the occurrence of cancer worldwide. The IARC released a report in 2015 detailing the effects of glyphosate, the active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup. The chemical glyphosate is a "colourless, odorless, crystalline solid. It is formulated as a salt consisting of deprotonated acid of glyphosate and a cation."²⁵ The glyphosate chemical was first synthesized in 1950, but its herbicidal properties were not discovered until 1970.²⁶ The use of glyphosate is widespread, as there are "more than 750 products containing glyphosate for sale in the USA alone."²⁷

There has not been significant regulation of glyphosate, as the EPA decided in 1993 that it did not pose any adverse effects to humans. However, the 2015 IARC findings challenged several long-standing assumptions regarding the chemical. First, it concluded that there is

²⁴ Charles M. Benbrook, "Trends in Glyphosate Herbicide Use in the United States and Globally," *Environmental Sciences Europe*, no. 1 (2016): 1.

²⁵ IARC, "Glyphosate," In: *Some Organophosphate Insecticides and Herbicides: Diazinon, Glyphosate, Malathion, Parathion, Tetrachlorvinphos*. IARC Working Group, March 3-10, 2015, Lyon (France). *The World Health Organization (WHO), the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans*. 2015.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 322.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 322.

“limited evidence in humans for the carcinogenicity of glyphosate.”²⁸ Additionally, there was “sufficient evidence in experimental animals for the carcinogenicity of glyphosate.”²⁹ The overall evaluation by the IARC was that “glyphosate is probably carcinogenic to humans.”³⁰ This decision sent shock waves across the chemical industry and concerned consumers. Monsanto immediately attempted to discredit the findings. However, the IARC is composed of independent, unbiased scientists, and serves as an unchallenged expert in the field. The IARC finding of glyphosate’s probable carcinogenic effects represented a departure from the current literature regarding the safety of Roundup and Monsanto products and shaped Monsanto’s contemporary regulatory, government relations, and media relations strategies.

²⁸ Ibid., 398.

²⁹ Ibid., 398.

³⁰ Ibid., 398.

CHAPTER TWO: Methods

Hypothesis and Predictions

The unethical business practices found in the Monsanto Roundup trials are a part of a larger historical precedent of influence at the Monsanto Company. The strategies Monsanto used from the 1950s onwards eventually failed the company in the courtroom. This research goes beyond a historical analysis to investigate current court cases and literature. The research analyzes the history of the dynamic corporate control of scientific information, influence on regulatory bodies, manipulation of public opinion, and creation of university partnerships to piece together how the business strategy backfired on the Monsanto Company through numerous contemporary court cases.

Monsanto represents the modern trend in corporations to have a strategy based on breaking down barriers between corporate entities and regulators, with businesses often believing it is in their best interest to manage these involvements to quicken regulatory approval and reap higher profits. However, for Monsanto, this strategy has proven to be incredibly flawed. Through the thousands of filed court cases it is evident that the corporate strategy made consumers question the safety of Monsanto's products. When consumers turned to independent bodies and scientists, and learned of Monsanto's influence, the company lost objective validation and public trust. Ultimately, Monsanto's corporate public affairs departments and unethical business practices, despite their intentions, increased liabilities for the firm in the courtroom and represent a flawed corporate strategy.

Methodology

The research methodology involved qualitative historical research processes. The Monsanto Papers were used as primary sources to detail the rise of contemporary Monsanto ghost-writing and unethical business practices. The Monsanto Papers were recently released through court cases and provide ample opportunity to show the result of business practices and the influence of corporate government relations on scientific and regulatory bodies.

Other qualitative research focused on The Monsanto Company Records, examined at the Washington University in St. Louis Special Collections Library. The researcher obtained permission from Bayer AG (Monsanto) to visit the archives and utilize the files for this research. The researcher conducted a three-day research trip, made possible through The Ohio State University History Department's Honors Thesis Research Grant, to investigate the Monsanto company's history of government relations and corporate public affairs. Through these sources, the researcher constructed a history of the rise of government relations with a focus on specific strategic plans to influence regulatory bodies, public opinion, and educational institutions during the 1980s.

This research investigates the roots of unethical business practices at the Monsanto Company. Though this research did not utilize formal ethical frameworks, the distinction between unethical and illegal business practices was vital. Whereas unethical business practices indicate a moral wrong and ambiguity, illegal business practices are a clear legal violation. When analyzing The Monsanto Papers and The Monsanto Company Records, the researcher used as grounds for unethical business behavior the basis of deception and failing to honor a company's and product's commitment to the safety of its consumers. Monsanto outlined the safety

responsibility to its consumers in annual and corporate responsibility reports spanning back decades. For example, in the 1979 Annual Report CEO John W. Hanley stated that “while the government has a proper role to play in establishing acceptable standards of industrial conduct, no one can relieve us of the primary responsibility for the safety of our own products and processes.”³¹

For this research ghost-writing is considered an unethical practice, though it is not considered an illegal practice by all established sources, due to its deliberate deception and presentation of scientific work to consumers. Additionally, though most corporations partake in public affairs activities to advance corporate agendas, Monsanto utilized unethical business practices as it failed in its commitment to consumers on the safety of its products. Monsanto aggressively influenced biotechnology regulations for its products to hasten commercialization and escalated its efforts over time from lobbying work, to ghost-writing, and to deliberate suppression of opposing scientific work. The distinction of unethical business practices was vital for the research, as plans and strategies Monsanto used in the 1950s to the 1980s and into the 21st century contributed to the breakdown of unbiased scientific and regulatory bodies. The breakdown and deception were ultimately Monsanto’s biggest liability in the courtroom and were instrumental in influencing juries’ decisions against Monsanto.

³¹ “Monsanto Company 1979 Annual Report,” *Mergent Archives*, (December 31, 1979): 8.

CHAPTER THREE: Analysis and Results

The Monsanto Papers

The Monsanto Papers, or so-called Monsanto Secret Documents, were obtained via discovery in the trial by the Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman law firm. The papers document internal Monsanto emails, reports, memos, and text messages that reveal insights into the practices used for regulatory and scientific influence at the corporation. The main areas of focus for this analysis are the following: regulatory and governmental bodies, media and public relations responses, and ghost-writing evidence. Before tracing the historical context of government relations at Monsanto it is vital to understand the issues surfacing in the contemporary trials to grasp the complete story of corporate influence.

Regulatory and Governmental Bodies

In 1985, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) completed a consensus review of glyphosate, the main active ingredient within the Roundup product, to review its safety in public usage.³² The review analyzed a 26-month rat study that observed tumors in rats exposed to glyphosate in addition to mutagenicity tests.³³ The group concluded based on the studies that “it is very unlikely that the glyphosate test group is consistent with any historical controls,” indicating a change in accepted scientific thought about the safety of glyphosate.³⁴ Thus, per established guidelines, the EPA classified glyphosate as a “class C ‘possible human carcinogen’ because of kidney adenomas in male mice.”³⁵ Monsanto

³² EPA Memo on Consensus View of Glyphosate, page 1, March 4, 1985, from The Monsanto Papers through court discovery procedures by Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman [here and after The Monsanto Papers].

³³ Ibid., 2.

³⁴ Ibid., 3.

³⁵ EPA Letter Reviewing Proposal to Classify Glyphosate as Class C Possible Human Carcinogen, page 1, April 3, 1985, The Monsanto Papers.

immediately attempted to counter the claim by submitting a lengthy document in 1986 to convince the scientific community “that glyphosate is not an oncogen.”³⁶

Monsanto’s influence on regulatory bodies continued into the twenty-first century. For example, in 2000, Monsanto email correspondences document that the company was working to alter government websites on glyphosate. The email stated that “how about the CAL EPA site that claims glyphosate causes tumors - yes a government site - we are working behind the scenes to get that changed!”³⁷ Furthermore, Dan Jenkins, Monsanto Company Director of Regulatory Affairs, wrote in April 2015 that Jess Rowland, Former Deputy Division Director of the EPA’s Office of Pesticide Programs, called him and said, “if I can kill this I should get a medal,” referring to another government agency’s proposed review of glyphosate.³⁸ These are vital examples of Monsanto countering established scientific thought about its products and attempts to influence agency regulation.

After the 2015 IARC decision that labeled glyphosate as a possible carcinogen, Monsanto launched another plan to counter scientific work on glyphosate. Monsanto hoped to “invalidate relevance of IARC,” a highly regarded scientific body.³⁹ Additionally, Monsanto hoped to make sure that the IARC “determination doesn't get more widely adopted within WHO.”⁴⁰ Overall hoping to “prevent future bad IARC decisions on pesticides/GMOs.”⁴¹ The strategy to combat

³⁶ Monsanto Submission to EPA SAP in 1986: Information to Support Conclusion That Glyphosate is Not a Class C Oncogen. page 2, January 23, 1986, The Monsanto Papers.

³⁷ Email Correspondence from Donna Farmer to Janice Armstrong Concerning Government Website Influence, page 1, April, 2001, The Monsanto Papers.

³⁸ Email Correspondence from Dan Jenkins and William Heydens Concerning Jess Rowland (EPA), page 2, April 28, 2015, The Monsanto Papers.

³⁹ Internal Monsanto Document on IARC Follow Up Demonstrating Safety of Glyphosate, page 1, March 24, 2015, The Monsanto Papers.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 1.

⁴¹ Ibid., 1.

IARC decisions, was a part of a broader corporate plan to invalidate and dismiss concerns from regulatory bodies to quicken the development of biotechnologies, at the expense of consumers.

Media and Public Relations Responses

Monsanto planned several extensive media relations plans to shape public opinion of its products. One plan focused on reaction to Carey Gillam and her published works. Gillam is an investigative journalist, focusing on the modern-day food system and the environmental, governmental, and scientific effects that result from the system. Gillam is critical of the Monsanto Company in her works, citing the influence of regulatory bodies and ghost-writing practices as a result of unethical business practices. Monsanto organized an eight-person team in May 2017 from media, scientific affairs, and chemistry departments to devise a communications strategy for the release of Gillam's *Whitewash* in October 2017.⁴² The main strategic goal was to “minimize impact of this book’s false claims made about Monsanto and Glyphosate” on stakeholders, policymakers, and societal audiences.⁴³

Additionally, an email exchange between a global business advisory firm and the Monsanto public relations team details more plans for the book release including a pop-up ad to a Monsanto sponsored blog post when a person searches “Monsanto Glyphosate Carey Gillam,” creating a “how to post book reviews email” to encourage Monsanto-supported negative reviews of the book, and making talking points for key third parties to more easily discredit the book.⁴⁴ Monsanto and the advisory firm produced a press release to the book, and within the edits, they wrote that “the author’s main flawed argument is that glyphosate is carcinogenic, which is based

⁴² Issues Management and Communicating. Strategy for Carey Gillam’s “Whitewash”, page 3, May 2017, The Monsanto Papers.

⁴³ Ibid., 1-2.

⁴⁴ Email Correspondence from Adam Cabbage Adam and Cole Waggoner on “Whitewash” Action Items, page 1-2, September 10, 2017, The Monsanto Papers.

on the 2015 IARC classification.”⁴⁵ Furthermore, they state that “to be clear: every regulatory agency in the world has concluded that glyphosate is safe to use,” a claim clearly disproved in the 2015 IARC report.⁴⁶ Monsanto targeted Gillam’s work, and other potentially adverse publications, through strategic media relations to influence the public narrative and public opinion on glyphosate, Roundup, and biotechnologies in the company’s favor.

Ghost-Writing Evidence

In 1999, via email, William Heydens, a Monsanto Company Product Safety Assessment Strategy Lead, described a scientific outreach plan that was in development. Heydens wrote that one of the significant elements of the plan was to work with “outside scientific experts who are influential at driving science, regulators, public opinion, etc. We would have the people directly or indirectly/behind-the-scenes work on our behalf.”⁴⁷ Additionally, in 2008, Dr. Charles Healy emailed Drs. Farmer and Saltmiras, regarding an academic manuscript he was sent to peer review on the cytotoxicity of Roundup and glyphosate in rats from the Editor and Chief of the “Cell and Toxicology” journal.⁴⁸ Dr. Healy wrote that “you two would be the reviewers in fact and I would then collate your comments and be the reviewer of record.”⁴⁹ These two exchanges depicted the use of ghost-writing and unethical scientific practices by Monsanto employees to positively shape scientific literature on glyphosate and Roundup.

Furthermore, in 2015, there was a series of email correspondences between Dr. John Acquavella, a Professor in Clinical Epidemiology at Aarhus University and former Monsanto

⁴⁵ Email Correspondence from Adam Cabbage Adam and Cole Waggoner on Monsanto Response to “Whitewash”, page 2, September 11, 2017, The Monsanto Papers.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁷ Email Correspondence on Scientific Outreach Council Meeting, page 1, May 26, 1999, The Monsanto Papers.

⁴⁸ Email Correspondence from Donna Farmer, Charles Healy, and David Saltmiras on Review Study for Roundup and Glyphosate Adverse Effects, page 1, August 19, 2008, The Monsanto Papers.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 1.

Company scientist, and Monsanto employees and consultants. In the email chain, Monsanto was not going to list Dr. Acquavella as an author on an expert panel review of the carcinogenic potential of the herbicide glyphosate, though he contributed substantially to the panel, due to his “prior employment at Monsanto.”⁵⁰ However, Dr. Acquavella wrote back, saying that “we call that ghost writing and it is unethical” and that he “can't be a part of deceptive authorship on a presentation or publication.”⁵¹ Though Dr. Acquavella was eventually given credit as an author for the publication, this is another examples of Monsanto’s attempt to conduct ghost-writing activities. This is one of numerous examples that serve as crucial evidence indicating how the Monsanto Company systematically participated in ghost-writing and altered the scientific process, publication norms, and established literature to benefit its biotechnology commercialization. The practice was well established internally and has a long history in the company’s biotechnology strategy. For example, in 1987, a Monsanto plan advised to “ghost-write OpEd pieces, [and] sample editorials.”⁵²

The Monsanto Papers consequently document a systematic plan by Monsanto to influence regulatory and governmental bodies, devise favorable strategic media and public relations responses, and actively support ghost-writing to influence the scientific thought and discussion surrounding glyphosate and biotechnologies. The contemporary analysis is clear that Monsanto has engaged in unethical business practices. However, it is necessary to conduct a historical analysis on the rise of government relations and public affairs strategies through archival documents to complete the larger historical context for how these contemporary

⁵⁰ Email Correspondence from John Acquavella and William Heydens on Monsanto Scientific Ghost-writing, page 4, November 3-6, 2015, The Monsanto Papers.

⁵¹ Ibid., 2-3.

⁵² BST Public Affairs Plan - Attachment 1, page 2, August 4, 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 6: Biotechnology (Public Affairs Plan) from Washington University, St. Louis, MO, University Archives, Department of Special Collections Monsanto Company Records [here and after Monsanto Company Records].

practices originated and developed at the Monsanto Company to culminate in present-day lawsuits and corporate liabilities.

Washington University in St. Louis Monsanto Company Archives

Rise of the Government Relations Department

After analyzing the contemporary evidence regarding the current Monsanto legal battles, it is essential to look to the past to uncover the development of these practices. Through an analysis of previously internal Monsanto documents, a history on the rise of the company's government relations department is constructed to demonstrate the foundations of the company's flawed business strategy. Specifically, examples of Monsanto's influence on regulatory and governmental bodies are evident through a greater understanding of the government relations plans and public affairs strategies that were developed and used from 1980 to 1989.

Corporate Public Affairs Structure

The Monsanto government relations department is a part of the company's larger corporate public affairs initiative. A summary of the initiatives that fall under corporate public affairs are those that enable "Monsanto's corporate goals through professional communications which shape perceptions about Monsanto and create active support among important audiences for the corporation, its strategy and its activities."⁵³ Monsanto recognizes its stakeholders in this task are "shareowners, customers, employees, ...neighbors..., media, government officials, the financial community, and others whose actions affect the corporation."⁵⁴ To shape said

⁵³ Corporate Public Affairs General, page 1, undated document (1987), series 11, box 1, folder 14: Media Relations (History), Monsanto Company Records.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 1.

perceptions surrounding the company, Monsanto staffed the corporate public affairs department with five St. Louis, six Washington D.C, and external Hill and Knowlton staff (a global public relations consulting firm), into five primary areas of activity: government relations, media relations, executive services, employee communications, science communications.⁵⁵ It is vital to analyze the way Monsanto structured the various areas of activity to understand the systematic approach to government relations and public influence, and to provide context for the strategies and plans the departments implemented. Specifically, the government relations, media relations, and science communications demonstrated the corporate influence depicted in contemporary cases.

According to Monsanto, government relations “includes federal government relations and lobbying for the corporation, state government relations, lobbying for corporate issues such as taxation, corporate governance, and other issues that cut across operating unit and subsidiary lines. It also includes the management of corporate political activity.”⁵⁶ This definition clearly outlines the areas of interest for government relations from lobbying to regulatory influence. Furthermore, Monsanto clearly marked the differences between federal and state initiatives.

Federal government relations from Monsanto are with the desired response to “support Monsanto’s corporate strategy” through influencing “actions by decision makers in the legislative, regulatory and administrative branches of government in Washington D.C.”⁵⁷ The federal government relations staff was two-sided: serving as advocates in government on issues affecting Monsanto to “exploit opportunities that will benefit the company” and as counselors to

⁵⁵ Ibid., 2-3.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁵⁷ Federal Government Relations, page 1, undated document (1987), series 11, box 1, folder 14: Media Relations (History), Monsanto Company Records.

the company on national issues.⁵⁸ Federal government relations staff would “be experts on how the federal government works and how it can be ethically and legally influenced” to the meet the needs of the corporation.⁵⁹ Monsanto laid out several objectives to reach these goals through developing “short and long-term activities,” increasing contacts, monitoring D.C events, and utilizing “Monsanto senior management as advocates.”⁶⁰

The desired response from the state government relations was to have “state government actions [that] will support Monsanto’s corporate strategy.”⁶¹ The corporate arm of the state relations was to deal with “taxation, corporate governance, general environmental laws and regulations, employment.”⁶² Additionally, the state relations team focused on the “hiring and management of outside lobbyists who serve multiple clients within Monsanto.”⁶³ The tactics to advance the Monsanto initiatives on the state level ranged from clarifying and communicating Monsanto company positions to “identify, hire, direct and monitor outside lobbyists in key states.”⁶⁴

Federal and state government relations were critical arms of the corporate government relations at Monsanto and represent the company’s overarching goal and strategy to influence biotechnology regulation by creating close relations with governmental and regulatory bodies. The other four areas under corporate public affairs were also vital to advancing the corporation’s positive image to society. The media relations arm of the government relations department played a crucial role in communicating important information to relevant audiences about

⁵⁸ Ibid., 1.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 1.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 2.

⁶¹ State Government Relations, page 1, undated document (1987), series 11, box 1, folder 14: Media Relations (History), Monsanto Company Records.

⁶² Ibid., 1.

⁶³ Ibid., 2.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 2.

Monsanto.⁶⁵ The media relations team outlined a yearly message through a “planned, aggressive” communication strategy.⁶⁶ Besides advancing the corporation’s business position, a noticeable objective used by the media relations team was to “protect Monsanto’s right to operate by improving public understanding of Monsanto’s environmental actions and community relations.”⁶⁷

An in-depth media relations plan crafted at the end of 1987 reveals in more detail how the department carried out the stated goals and objectives and serves as an outline for other media plans. Monsanto stated that it desired respect as a great company through both financial results and an outstanding reputation.⁶⁸ Precisely, in support of government relations efforts, the media relations teams planned on “enlisting media outlets in the nation’s capital and elsewhere to convey key messages to federal policy makers” as a critical strategy point.⁶⁹ Outside of financial performance, one of the three key messages was to highlight Monsanto’s corporate responsibility efforts relating to public policy, philanthropies, and education.⁷⁰ Several tactics are detailed in the media relations plan spanning from the CEO, to investor relations, to “identify Business editors of local newspapers, create media list,” and to advance federal policy through a “Monsanto presence at the White House Correspondents Dinner.”⁷¹ Monsanto not only influenced regulatory and governmental bodies for favorable biotechnology regulations, but also influenced public opinion to create an amicable environment for its own corporate objectives.

⁶⁵ Media Relations, page 1, undated document (1987), series 11, box 1, folder 14: Media Relations (History), Monsanto Company Records.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 1.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 2.

⁶⁸ 1988 Media Relations, page 1, undated document (1987), series 11, box 1, folder 14: Media Relations (History), Monsanto Company Records.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 1.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 2.

⁷¹ Ibid., 3-4.

In its science communications there was evidence of the blurring lines between the corporation and regulatory departments. Monsanto stated that it would implement biotechnology strategies in the “context of its overall commitment to the corporate social responsibility values.”⁷² For example, the Corporate Biotechnology Strategy Committee’s approach was to “create a favorable public atmosphere leading to responsible and meaningful government regulatory programs that will allow development, testing, and commercialization of biotechnology products.”⁷³ One key tactic for the goal was to “ensure that Monsanto’s position is represented among key academic decision makers, think tanks, and other influentials who are able to advocate points of view which shape government policy in support of biotechnology.”⁷⁴ The aforementioned tactic was a clear example of Monsanto attempting to influence scientific work and influential scientific bodies to advance favorable biotechnology regulatory policy. In the 1980s, Monsanto focused on ensuring scientific communities understood the benefits of biotechnology. However, Monsanto efforts escalated over time to include various unethical scientific and business practices, culminating with numerous ghost-writing cases in the 21st century.

Through an analysis of the desired responses from its government relations, media relations, and science communications teams, under direction of the corporate public affairs department, it is clear the Monsanto had, and continues to have, government relations and corporate influence ingrained in the company’s strategy. Government relations, media relations, and science communications were inherently interdisciplinary, spanning across divisions and geographic boundaries. The team’s descriptions make it clear that the goal was to influence

⁷² Science Communication, page 1, undated document (1987), series 11, box 1, folder 14: Media Relations (History), Monsanto Company Records.

⁷³ Ibid., 1.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 3.

governments, regulatory bodies, scientific communities, and public opinion for the corporation's benefit. The historical context revealed how the company escalated government relations and corporate public affairs measures throughout the 20th and 21st century to quicken biotechnology commercialization.

Government Relations and Public Affairs Strategies

After diving into the formulation and overview of the government relations department, it was vital to look at specific examples of corporate government affairs' influence on government, regulatory bodies, scientific communities, and public opinion. Explicitly, the government relations department developed extensive biotechnology influential efforts, starting from 1980 to 1989 through lobbying, advertising, and public relations to influence key decision maker's opinions. The following plans and strategies are critical examples of Monsanto's influence and demonstrate the company's unethical business practices.

Government Regulations and Business Relations Task Force

In November 1980, John W. Hanley, the CEO of Monsanto Company, wrote a letter to President-elect Ronald Reagan. Reagan established a "Business Advisory Board's Task Force on Government Regulation and Business Relations," that Hanley was chairman of, to uncover regulatory burdens on industry.⁷⁵ In addition to Hanley from Monsanto, eight other CEOs and presidents ranged across the industries from Prudential Insurance, Heizer Corporation, Merrill Lynch & Company, and Bankers Trust Corporation to advise the incoming Reagan

⁷⁵ Letter from John W. Hanley to Ronald Reagan, page 1, November 7, 1980, series 10, box 4, folder 9: Government Regulations and Business Relations Task Force, Monsanto Company Records.

Administration.⁷⁶ The task force produced a report, diving into three significant sections to uncover regulatory burdens such as rationalizing the regulatory system, restoring constitutionality to the regulatory system, and improving business-government relations.⁷⁷ The report was a vital document to consider in-depth as it revealed larger industry goals with governmental bodies. Additionally, the report revealed Monsanto's CEO's goals and proposed solutions to counter perceived problems.⁷⁸ The larger themes Hanley outlined are critical in shaping government relations strategies throughout the 1980s and later 20th century.

The task force outlined uncontrolled costs, duplication, conflict, and obsolescence as significant problems in the regulatory system. Solutions from the task force were a cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analysis of proposed regulations, setting a regulatory budget for the costs a regulation could impose, and deregulation through the new administration.⁷⁹ Additionally, the delegation of legislative authority to agencies was a significant concern, and the task force recommended as possible solutions more congressional oversight and consolidation of regulatory agencies through presidential oversight.⁸⁰ Hanley and Monsanto made it clear that the sheer number of regulations imposed and the complexity of agencies were harmful to business and a streamlined approach to regulations would ensure faster commercialization of firm's products. Though the loosening of regulatory restrictions is not inherently unethical, Monsanto's efforts led to the unethical safety commitment breach of Roundup with its consumers.

The task force pointed to an anti-business bias in government as a significant problem. Specifically, "regulatory agency staff members tend to be inexperienced in business and industry

⁷⁶ Report to Ronald Reagan, President-elect on Government Regulation and Business Relations, page 2, November 6, 1980, series 10, box 4, folder 9: Government Regulations and Business Relations Task Force, Monsanto Company Records.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 1.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 4-8.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 12-15.

and reflect the anti-business bias.”⁸¹ Some solutions include presidential appointments that cultivate a more positive relationship between business and government, a revitalized Commerce department to unshackle “American business from excessive regulation,” and institutionalizing within government an “advocate of enterprise.”⁸² Hanley argued that a closer relationship between the public and private sector was necessary. The closer relationship between the public and private sectors, and a reduced number of regulations and simplification of agencies, are common themes in Monsanto government relations strategies throughout the 1980s.

The task force’s recommendations fit with Reagan’s larger deregulatory philosophy and plans for the 1980s. The previous Ford and Carter administrations enacted deregulation for sectors ranging from financial services to air travel as a way of freeing companies from governmental oversight to allow the market to flourish.⁸³ The Reagan administration built off its predecessors, but with a more far reaching approach.⁸⁴ Specifically, earlier administrations enacted “regulatory reform” as a way to improve government effectiveness through regulation revisions.⁸⁵ Whereas Reagan’s administration focused on “regulatory relief” to reduce the burden of regulations on corporations and consumers through the removal of regulations.⁸⁶ This distinction demonstrated a new approach to regulations and regulatory bodies in the 1980s that aligned both with Monsanto and the other executives in the task force.

Universities also played an influential role in identifying the task force’s issues and crafting its recommendations. The Gulf Universities Research Consortium (GURC), made up of 17 schools ranging from Rice University to the University of Alabama, President James Sharp

⁸¹ Ibid., 16.

⁸² Ibid., 18.

⁸³ Susan Rose-Ackerman, “Deregulation and Reregulation: Rhetoric and Reality,” *Journal of Law & Politics* 6, no. 2 (Winter 1990): 287.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 288.

sent a letter to Paul Howell, a member of the Reagan Industry Advisory Committee, with an attached document of regulatory reform research that shaped Howell's input. The GURC report stated that government and agencies formulated regulations with a lack of industry knowledge, and that the regulations were overly complex and adversely affected productivity, innovation, and costs in American businesses.⁸⁷ GURC asserted that the government enacted most regulations from "fear and uncertainty rather than knowledge," and Congress and academia counterbalanced with efforts to investigate and simplify regulations.⁸⁸ The GURC's influence depicted the close relationship between educational institutions and businesses. The partnership is another central theme utilized throughout Monsanto corporate strategies.

1981-1985 Biotechnology Plans

In addition to direct influence in presidential policy formulation and regulatory plans, the Monsanto Company developed many initiatives to influence government, regulators, and public opinion to shape policies on new biotechnologies. Monsanto leaders outlined efforts via government relations and public affairs departments to shape public opinion, regulatory agencies, and all levels of government to create a positive view of Monsanto and its biotechnology products and programs. The strategies ultimately blurred the line between the regulated and regulators. The cross-over is evident in a series of letters, from previously confidential internal Monsanto company documents, public policy plans, public relations plans, and congressional testimonies from 1981 to 1985.

Monsanto knew from as early as 1981 that the government relations department would need to "formulate a public policy" and "shape government/legislative and public opinion

⁸⁷ Letter and Report from James Sharp (GURC) to Paul Howell, page 2, October 23, 1980, series 10, box 4, folder 9: Government Regulations and Business Relations Task Force, Monsanto Company Records.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 5, 7.

environment” to ensure a favorable view of biotechnology research and commercialization.⁸⁹

For example in 1982, a review of biotechnology public opinion and regulation made it evident that the company would face more regulations and issues as the science progressed.⁹⁰

In 1983, Monsanto established the Biotechnology Government and Public Relations Committee in response to a threat of more regulations and as a “mechanism to focus and coordinate at the corporate level our [Monsanto’s] biotechnology program, external relations with the regulatory and legislative community, with the press, state and local officials, trade associations, international organizations and think tanks and national opinion leaders.”⁹¹ The board was established by Dr. Schneiderman under the direction of Chairman Will Carpenter.⁹²

As chairman of the committee, Carpenter created a unified corporate policy spanning across Monsanto business units from corporate research & development, public affairs, regulatory affairs, state government relations, environmental policy, and several others.⁹³ The main Monsanto product areas the committee focused communications on were agricultural, animal health, and personal health care products.⁹⁴ The committee was a part of the more extensive Biotechnology-Government Relations department to cultivate favorable public perception and government regulations on Monsanto biotechnology products.⁹⁵ As a result of the

⁸⁹ Biotechnology Policy Program - Executive Summary, page 1, 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 1.

⁹¹ Letter from W.D. Carpenter to H.A. Schneiderman on Monsanto Biotechnology Government and Public Relations Committee, page 1, July 25, 1984, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

⁹² Biotechnology Policy Program - Executive Summary, page 1, 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

⁹³ Biotechnology Policy Program - Coordinating Committee, page 3, 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 1.

⁹⁵ Biotechnology Public Policy Program, page 1, 1984, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

creation of the committee in 1983, the “first visits to government agencies to discuss regulation were made.”⁹⁶

Specifically, through internal coordination from the committee, Monsanto business units hoped to “draft and recommend Monsanto position on emerging legislative regulatory or public opinion issues.”⁹⁷ The Monsanto government relations department influence spanned across internal business units from public relations, the Washington office, state government, and law, for complete mobilization.⁹⁸ The company developed and cultivated corporate literature, local community initiatives, and press relationships to advance their pro-biotechnology message.⁹⁹ To achieve policy goals, the department aimed to establish a comprehensive contact network of regulatory agencies and congressional staff.¹⁰⁰ Additionally, the company developed relationships with “trade associations, think tanks, and public interest groups and academia,” and met with senior members of the administration to cultivate a favorable biotechnology climate.¹⁰¹

In 1984, the committee aimed for no new legislation regarding biotechnology and met with groups ranging from the Office of Management and Budget to EPA Administrator Ruckelshaus “to establish a better understanding of biotechnology among the regulatory community.”¹⁰² Additionally, the committee organized a visit of 20 EPA personnel to Monsanto company headquarters in St. Louis “to brief them regarding the status and goal of the

⁹⁶ Biotechnology Policy Program - Executive Summary, page 2, 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

⁹⁷ Biotechnology-Government Relations/Relations Affairs, page 1, 1984, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

⁹⁸ Biotechnology Public Policy Program, page 1, 1984, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 1.

¹⁰⁰ Biotechnology-Government Relations/Relations Affairs, page 2, 1984, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁰¹ Biotechnology Public Policy Program, page 2, 1984, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁰² Letter from W.D. Carpenter to H.A. Schneiderman on Monsanto Biotechnology Government and Public Relations Committee, page 1, July 25, 1984, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

biotechnology program.”¹⁰³ Furthermore, the newly formed committee “effectively participated in states and local biotechnology issues, proposed legislation and proposed regulation to the extent that we were a significant factor in decisions in Colorado and California as well as providing inputs to a number of other governmental bodies.”¹⁰⁴ The early 1980 efforts demonstrate how Monsanto’s strategy focused on cultivating a closer relationship between the public and private sector and curtailing the amount of regulations to ensure timely biotechnology research and commercialization.

Numerous letters between Monsanto company leaders detail the inner workings of the Biotechnology Government and Public Relations Committee. In early August 1984, W.D. Carpenter, a key figure in the committee, wrote that “there will be accelerated interest in biotechnology in the next 18 months on the part of Congress, the media, activist groups, and the agencies.”¹⁰⁵ In preparation, he noted that “Monsanto has preempted the socially responsible position,” but he argued for public and government relations efforts to overcome trade association issues.¹⁰⁶ Throughout the year, Monsanto provided laboratory tours and experiences to government officials, the media, and regulatory officials such as the EPA, USDA, and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in hopes of creating favorable relationships.¹⁰⁷ Carpenter wrote at the beginning of February 1985 of the committee’s many accomplishments in 1984.¹⁰⁸ Mainly, “the Monsanto message of the need for scientifically based regulations...has become the message of industry, environmentalists, government and Congress,” indicating the effect the government

¹⁰³ Ibid., 2.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰⁵ Letter from W.D. Carpenter to H.A. Schneiderman, page 1, August 14, 1984, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 1.

¹⁰⁷ Biotechnology Policy Program - Executive Summary, page 2, 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁰⁸ Letter from W.D. Carpenter to H.A. Schneiderman, February 12, 1985, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

and public relations departments had on policy and public opinion.¹⁰⁹ However, he stated that environmental organizations still needed more ecological data before they would be convinced.¹¹⁰

Throughout the 1980s, numerous Monsanto Company employees served as expert witnesses before Congress on biotechnology issues. In June 1984, Dr. John Marvel, a General Manager in the Research Division at Monsanto, and Dr. Will Carpenter, a Monsanto General Manager of Technology and head of the government relations subcommittee, testified before the House of Representatives Agriculture Committee on Department Operations, Research and Foreign Agriculture.¹¹¹ Marvel painted biotechnology as a strategic tool “to ensure that man’s food supplies are met” through genetically engineered microbial pesticides and plants.¹¹² Marvel asserted that excessive regulation could hamper innovation and the need for government protection in order to prosper.¹¹³ Carpenter echoed Marvel and stated the “regulations should be effective, scientifically based and implemented under existing laws” and that “new legislation is unnecessary.”¹¹⁴ Furthermore, Carpenter asserted that unlike previous regulations, biotechnology presented a “rare opportunity for industry and government to work together early” to create a favorable market for Monsanto product commercialization.¹¹⁵ Marvel and Carpenter's testimonies are significant examples of corporate lobbying and Monsanto’s influence on lawmakers and governmental bodies to limit regulations and create a closer private and public relationship in the 1980s.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Testimony of Dr. John Marvel in House of Representatives, June 7, 1984, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (2), Monsanto Company Records.

¹¹² Ibid., 3.

¹¹³ Ibid., 8.

¹¹⁴ Testimony of Dr. Will D. Carpenter in House of Representatives, page 1-2, June 7, 1984, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (2), Monsanto Company Records.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 4.

In 1985, many of the overarching government relations goals built off the 1984 objectives and accomplishments for the Biotechnology Government Relations & Public Relations Committee. Monsanto hoped to continue to increase exposure and education on its research in biotechnology.¹¹⁶ In regards to federal regulatory programs, the “emphasis in 1985 is [was] to limit legislative activity and encourage regulatory implementation and develop non-industry support...for this result.”¹¹⁷ Beyond just the federal level, in 1985, Monsanto hoped to support its biotechnology program through state and international initiatives.¹¹⁸

For example in 1985, Monsanto launched a comprehensive state biotechnology advertising and public affairs program in Columbus, Ohio and Columbia, South Carolina.¹¹⁹ Monsanto’s Biotechnology Government Relations Committee and the Biotechnology Communications Task Force created a series of activities in July, August, and September for state government leaders and the general public in an attempt to counter low public awareness of biotechnology and to proactively build a positive public consensus of both biotechnology and Monsanto.¹²⁰ Monsanto selected Columbus and Columbia as locations for the program due to their population sizes and large universities.¹²¹

The advertising program consisted of television and newspaper print advertisements.¹²² The television advertisement was shown 131 times in Columbus and 92 times in Columbia over the three months.¹²³ Four different print advertisements depicting how biotechnology could solve

¹¹⁶ Biotechnology Government Relations & Public Relations Committee Goals, page 2, February 4, 1985, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 3.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 5-6.

¹¹⁹ Biotechnology Policy Program - Executive Summary, page 2, 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹²⁰ Monsanto Platform - Biotechnology, page 11, 1985, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (2), Monsanto Company Records.

¹²¹ Ibid., 10.

¹²² Ibid., 11.

¹²³ Ibid., 11.

world hunger were published eight times in each city over the same time frame.¹²⁴ In addition to the advertising campaign, Monsanto organized a comprehensive media tour, direct mail to civic leaders, a survey to top business leaders on the economic potential of biotechnology, and numerous speeches.¹²⁵ Monsanto even commissioned an exhibit at Columbus's Center of Science and Industry (COSI), titled "Genetic Engineering; Understanding the Nature of Change" that provided interactive and educational exhibits on biotechnology and genetic engineering.¹²⁶ The COSI exhibit was received with widespread acclaim, with COSI having "its biggest day of attendance in history" on August 24, 1985, coinciding with the Monsanto exhibit launch.¹²⁷

The advertising and public affairs plan played a crucial role in influencing public and governmental officials' views on the new science, indicating the broad range of ways the Monsanto Company systematically altered public opinion. The program was widely successful for the Monsanto corporation; in the 1985 post-plan survey of Ohio business leaders, 80% of the 200 respondents responded: "Yes, make more effort" to "Do you believe Ohio state government should make a greater effort to encourage the development of the genetic engineering industry."¹²⁸ The favorable biotechnology news and benefits to Ohio agricultural and business investments were publicly released through newspapers such as the *Columbus Dispatch*, further

¹²⁴ Ibid., 11.

¹²⁵ Monsanto Platform - Biotechnology, page 12, 1985, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (2), Monsanto Company Records. Letter from Vern Riffe, Ohio House of Representatives Speaker, page 118, August 9, 1985, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (2), Monsanto Company Records.

¹²⁶ Kurt Stull COSI Press Release, page 108, 1985, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (2), Monsanto Company Records.

¹²⁷ Letter from Barabara Wolfe to John Mussey, page 119, September 3, 1985, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (2), Monsanto Company Records.

¹²⁸ Biotechnology Poll Results, page 115, 1985, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (2), Monsanto Company Records.

supporting Monsanto's campaign and demonstrating the methods the company used to cultivate positive public, governmental, and business opinions for biotechnology and its products.¹²⁹

A significant part of the Monsanto government relations strategy for biotechnology regulation was engaging academia, professional societies, and environmental organizations in the conversations to bridge the divide between academia and the private sector.¹³⁰ Concerning academia, in 1985, Dow, DuPont, and Monsanto joined together to sponsor a conference at Cornell University to provide education for biotechnology and open a dialogue with environmental organizations.¹³¹ Additionally, Monsanto specifically mentioned MIT, University of Texas, Rutgers University, University of Nebraska, and University of Minnesota as critical academic and university contacts.¹³² Regarding professional society influence, Monsanto worked with the American Society for Microbiology, American Chemical Society, and numerous other organizations to provide a dialogue about biotechnology for preeminent scientists in the biology field.¹³³ Additionally, Monsanto organized countless symposiums in 1985 and 1986 to shape a positive dialogue surrounding biotechnology regulation amongst environmental organizations and worked closely with the National Wildlife Foundation and Environmental Law Institute, amongst others.¹³⁴ Monsanto's efforts to influence scientific communities and professional organizations, supported the larger corporate public affairs and government relations strategies to gain support from key stakeholders and gatekeepers in biotechnology commercialization.

From 1980 to 1985, the government relations affairs and corporate public affairs plans systematically influenced the government and public to support Monsanto agricultural and

¹²⁹ Ibid., 115.

¹³⁰ Biotechnology Outreach - Environmental and Professional Societies, page 1, April 25, 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 4: Biotechnology (Policy Program Source Book) - 1986 (2), Monsanto Company Records.

¹³¹ Ibid., 1.

¹³² Ibid., 3.

¹³³ Ibid., 2.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 1-2.

biotechnology products. The early 1980s plans focused efforts on governmental and regulatory body influence, shaping public opinion through media plans, and interacting and gaining support in scientific communities. The strategies are part of a larger historical context of the influential business practices that culminated in the contemporary cases regarding Roundup. Furthermore, the 1980 to 1985 plans laid the foundation for more aggressive corporate influence on regulatory and governmental bodies, public opinion, and scientific communities, from 1986 to the end of the Reagan administration in 1989.

1986 Biotechnology Plan

Monsanto methodically documented its plans to influence governmental and regulatory bodies, public opinion, and scientific communities and align regulators with company strategic goals. In 1986 the company put together a public affairs program and budget summary that described the overarching goal as to help “the ‘public’ who shape regulatory and legislative policy in the country understand the benefits and safety of biotechnology” and commercialize biotechnology products.¹³⁵ The plan focused on government and regulatory agencies, the scientific community, media relations, and educational institutions as the key targets of corporate influence.

The plan focused first on high-level government attention, meaning an understanding of biotechnology’s economic benefits by the president and heads of regulatory agencies to speed up the commercialization process.¹³⁶ Secondly, congressional action to ensure that there was a favorable environment in Congress for supportive biotechnology regulatory policies.¹³⁷ Thirdly,

¹³⁵ Monsanto Biotechnology Public Affairs Program and Budget Summary, page 1, December 19, 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 6: Biotechnology (Public Affairs Plan), Monsanto Company Records.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 1.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 1.

thought leader attention to cultivating positive views amongst academics, think tanks, and the environmental community to provide public support to regulatory agencies.¹³⁸ Lastly, local community acceptance, media relations, and employee communications were all lumped together to cultivate excellent views on biotechnology to counter any anti-biotechnology advocates.¹³⁹ In total, Monsanto allocated \$3,184,000 for the 1986 public affairs plan. Broken down according to the four main sections of program costs Monsanto dispersed \$530,000 to high-level government action, \$220,000 to congressional action, \$465,000 to thought leaders, and \$750,000 to local community acceptance.¹⁴⁰

Within high-level government understanding, the focus was on briefing materials, US advocacy support, regulatory blueprinting, and a national corporate advertising program.¹⁴¹ Monsanto focused its 1986 efforts on congressional leadership, legislation, an expanded government contact program, US presidential platform endorsement, and international liaison programs.¹⁴² Monsanto also concentrated its efforts on university contacts, thought leaders, independent biotechnology policy institutes, and coordination with trade association programs to establish favorable environments and views of biotechnology products and regulation.¹⁴³ Universities were essential to Monsanto's strategy as a way to "educate congressional leaders and senior administration policy developers" and strengthen the university-government-industry relationship.¹⁴⁴ Community relations programs, media relations, and employee communications mostly focused on crisis response plans, information kits, public opinion research, and clear

¹³⁸ Ibid., 1.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 1.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 1.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 2-3.

¹⁴² Ibid., 2-4.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 4-6.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 4-5.

communication plans to Monsanto employees.¹⁴⁵ The plans depict how the business tactics are a part of a larger corporate strategy that evolved into 21st century litigations.

In addition to the overarching public affairs plan in 1986, Monsanto devised a bovine somatotropin (BST) specific public affairs plan to promote the product using similar methods to target similar audiences and stakeholders. BST, otherwise known as bovine growth hormone, is a drug used on dairy cows to increase milk production. In September 1986, the BST project was at a “critical stage” due to concerns with the technology’s product safety which led to talks in Congress of legislative action.¹⁴⁶ Thus, Monsanto stated that there was a need for a “comprehensive public affairs program to counter these negative forces.”¹⁴⁷ The devised plan encompassed “public relations, government relations and key influence group contacts” to build support for the biotechnology product among the four target audiences: federal and state government affairs, key influence groups, and the general public.¹⁴⁸ The plan laid out a specific and strategic timeline for actions from 1986 to 1988 in preparation for the product’s introduction in 1989.¹⁴⁹

One key action point of the plan was to develop a public relations plan to address the BST concerns.¹⁵⁰ The main strategies of the program were to be proactive in the media, preemptive with the government, diffuse criticism, generate farmer support, and drive public comprehension.¹⁵¹ Monsanto hired part-time lobbyists, developed relationships with

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 7-10.

¹⁴⁶ BST Public Affairs Plan, page 1, September 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 6: Biotechnology (Public Affairs Plan), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 1.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 1-2.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 4.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 2.

¹⁵¹ BST Public Affairs Plan - Attachment 1, page 1, August 4, 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 6: Biotechnology (Public Affairs Plan), Monsanto Company Records.

congressional staff, and generated support and “allies” in dairy state capitals.¹⁵² Monsanto also planned to “ghost-write OpEd pieces, [and] sample editorials” in late 1987.¹⁵³ Ghost-written media and scientific work was designed to manipulate public opinion in favor of corporate goals and claims. The writings were an unethical approach to shaping public opinion and foreshadowed the company’s future practices.

Political support was sought out by Monsanto through identifying critical contacts in the federal government, agricultural groups, and activist groups.¹⁵⁴ Monsanto’s main BST goals concerned identifying contacts that could impact the political process on all levels of local, state, and federal governments.¹⁵⁵ Monsanto focused on reaching as many people and contacts as possible to deliver a positive message about BST, while preparing for House hearings and congressional initiatives concerning BST.¹⁵⁶ However, Monsanto made it clear that “no effort should be made to exert influence on the FDA decision.”¹⁵⁷ Instead, the plans focused on preparing people for adverse reactions in the public arena and gaining a trusted support base for BST to later launch a political support arm.¹⁵⁸ Though acknowledging the regulatory bodies, the statement supporting the FDA was contradictory to the developments of 1980-1986 where the company attempted to dramatically scale back regulations. Furthermore, Monsanto shaped public opinion, created close partnerships with scientific communities, and influenced governmental and regulatory bodies to craft pro-biotechnology regulations throughout the early 1980s. Thus,

¹⁵² Ibid., 2.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 2.

¹⁵⁴ BST Public Affairs Plan, page 2, September 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 6: Biotechnology (Public Affairs Plan), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁵⁵ BST Public Affairs Plan - Attachment 2, page 1, September 1986, series 1, box 2, folder 6: Biotechnology (Public Affairs Plan), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 1.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 1.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 1.

Monsanto's support of the FDA and regulations loses all credibility and impact, as the company played a role in targeting and influencing the regulatory body to Monsanto's own benefit.

1987 Government Relations Support

The government relations department continued to gain momentum and devised comprehensive strategies to influence regulatory bodies, public opinion, and scientific communities to serve the interests of Monsanto. The plans in 1987 detailed continued unethical business practices, part of the larger corporate strategy at the Monsanto Company. In 1987, similar to past years, the main focus of government and public relations was “executive and legislative brand communications, public communications, and employee communications.”¹⁵⁹ In 1987, the CEO of the Monsanto Company, Richard Mahoney, stated that “Monsanto fought early for a strong regulatory climate to earn the public's trust” and that the process “needs to be free to operate” independently of increased regulation and meddling.¹⁶⁰ In 1987 Monsanto enlisted as public relations counsel Hill and Knowlton (H&K) in a \$1,255,000 yearlong contract to advance Mahoney's strategy.¹⁶¹ The million-dollar contract indicated the financial investment and importance placed on corporate public affairs and media relations to shape public opinion that Monsanto was willing to make.

In 1987, Monsanto prepared for several executive and legislative branch communications in a systematic effort to advance biotechnology commercialization and ensure a favorable regulatory environment. One of the key influential leaders that Monsanto targeted was Vice

¹⁵⁹ Materials Monsanto Public and Government Affairs Program in Biotechnology, page 1, 1987, series 1, box 2, folder 5: Biotechnology (Programs) (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁶⁰ Remarks by Richard J. Mahoney at Monsanto Company Board of Directors' Dinner, page 3, May 21, 1987, series 1, box 2, folder 5: Biotechnology (Programs) (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁶¹ Letter from Robert Dillenschneider (H&K CEO) to Richard Mahoney (Monsanto CEO), page 1, January 8, 1987, series 1, box 2, folder 5: Biotechnology (Programs) (1), Monsanto Company Records.

President George H. Bush. While visiting St. Louis University, Bush stated that the biotechnology developed by Monsanto could mean great things for American farmers and the agricultural sector.¹⁶² Bush argued that “the machinery of government does not discourage innovation” and that the “work of coordinating our regulatory efforts is proceeding smoothly.”¹⁶³ Bush also stated that the government “must do a better job of protecting our [American business] intellectual property from infringement by competitors.”¹⁶⁴ These statements echoed the main goals of the earlier Monsanto government relations plans. The themes of a closer public and private sector relationship and the government creating a favorable regulatory climate for Monsanto biotechnology commercialization echoed CEO Hanley’s initial strategy in 1980. Bush’s speech was both the result of a systemic corporate attempt by Monsanto to shape public and governmental opinion throughout the 1980s and Reagan era deregulatory policies.

In addition to the executive branch, Monsanto focused its efforts on gaining support amongst American legislative bodies in 1987. Monsanto broke down Washington contacts in Congress by company officials to maximize influence. Specifically, key Monsanto Company officials such as Mahoney, Harbison, Berra, Carpenter, Corbett, Reding, and Schneiderman were each assigned about four Congressmen or Senators to directly influence.¹⁶⁵ Another report was drafted listing congressional committees and members who might have an interest in biotechnology, broken out by issue.¹⁶⁶ The report was used to create talking points and issues to advocate Monsanto’s positions on competitiveness and environmental matters to sway

¹⁶² Draft Speech for Vice President George Bush at St. Louis University, page 3, April 22, 1987, series 1, box 2, folder 5: Biotechnology (Programs) (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 6.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 6.

¹⁶⁵ Washington Contracts, page 1-3, 1987, series 1, box 2, folder 5: Biotechnology (Programs) (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁶⁶ Congress-Biotechnology List, page 1, March 30, 1987, series 1, box 2, folder 5: Biotechnology (Programs) (1), Monsanto Company Records.

governmental officials during visits.¹⁶⁷ These reports revealed the extent to which Monsanto developed corporate strategies to gain key influential stakeholders and convince them of biotechnology's benefits to enable commercialization of its products.

In addition to the thorough government relations plans, there was a robust media relations plan developed in 1987, that launched from July 1987 to July 1988 to continuously shape public opinion on biotechnology and the Monsanto Company.¹⁶⁸ The objective of the plan was to “educate the media so they will convey Monsanto messages on biotechnology to public opinion leaders - at the federal, state and local levels - who will become constituents and reinforce Monsanto messages.”¹⁶⁹ One of the main strategies was to “develop messages and materials based on the scientific knowledge and target them to the opinion leaders at all levels and to the general public.”¹⁷⁰ Some of the target audiences of the plans were daily newspapers, magazines, members of Congress, “regulatory agency officials,” White House officials, senate officials, local officials, presidential candidates, and university officials.¹⁷¹ Through strategic media kits, message development, legislative action responses/news releases, and Monsanto spokespeople, Monsanto aimed to explain the benefits of biotechnology and gain public approval as an industry leader.¹⁷² Thus, the 1987 plan was aligned with earlier 1980 strategies, as a combination of media relations to influence public opinion along with a continued push by Monsanto to influence the Reagan administration, Congress, and regulatory agencies to advocate for Monsanto biotechnology.

¹⁶⁷ Talking Points and Issues for Monsanto Steering Committee, page 1, June 18, 1987, series 1, box 2, folder 5: Biotechnology (Programs) (1), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁶⁸ Corporate Biotechnology Media Relations Plan, page 2, June 11, 1987, series 1, box 2, folder 5: Biotechnology (Programs) (3?), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 3-5, 9.

1988 Government Relations Support

Efforts continued as the century ended, with government relations plans ramping up in 1988. The 1988 biotechnology strategy was broken up to highlight government communications, public interest/thought leaders, and media relations.¹⁷³ In regards to government programs, the “economic potential for biotechnology will be the major emphasis for 1988,” especially with an emphasis on integration into congressional and presidential campaigns of 1988.¹⁷⁴ In addition to briefing materials and an advocacy document, Monsanto created a “federal regulatory blueprint, responsive to corporate and industry needs, and sensitive to concerns and public environmental safety, [that] will be prepared for use in working with congressional candidates and Presidential candidates.”¹⁷⁵

Specifically, in regards to congressional influence, Monsanto aimed to target congressional leadership through visits to Washington, DC, and St. Louis with a focus on “communication with core congressional leaders.”¹⁷⁶ Additionally, Monsanto played an active role in influencing policies and actions through providing testimonies and influencing the amendment of certain biotechnology regulations.¹⁷⁷ Monsanto targeted specific members of the executive branch such as cabinet officers, US trade representatives, and White House policy leaders from both Democratic and Republican policy groups.¹⁷⁸ Monsanto specifically listed out agencies to work with, such as the “EPA, FDA, and USDA on implementation and development

¹⁷³ 1988 Biotechnology Strategy, 1988, series 11, box 1, folder 14: Media Relations (History), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 1.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 2.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 2.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 3.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 3.

of regulatory issues impacting biotechnology,” in addition to supporting presidential and congressional platforms that positively focused on biotechnology regulations.¹⁷⁹

In regards to the public interest and thought leader programs, one of the initial goals was to work with universities and university leaders to “inform the government and the public about the advantages of biotechnology.”¹⁸⁰ Additionally, Monsanto hoped to work with public policy influencers outside the government to “introduce our strategies to regulatory and legislative bodies, domestically and internationally.”¹⁸¹ This documentation was in combination with continued talks surrounding the creation of an independent biotechnology policy institute, different trade association programs, and comprehensive media and employee communications programs.¹⁸²

Later in 1988, Monsanto held a corporate meeting in a St. Louis hotel to discuss media relations and government relations.¹⁸³ David Brown was the Vice President of Government Affairs in 1988 and presented updates and goals regarding the department to corporate leaders.¹⁸⁴ Ultimately a significant point by Brown was that “policy issues at the local, state, and national levels will continue to have great impact on the company’s business activities.”¹⁸⁵ The main goal for 1988, similar to those throughout the 1980s, was the “institution of appropriate Congressional and Executive branch regulatory policy on biotechnology and by no untimely governmental actions which will be detrimental to plans for commercial development.”¹⁸⁶ Also, Monsanto

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 4.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 5.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 5.

¹⁸² Ibid., 7-8.

¹⁸³ Breckenridge Frontenac Meeting Agenda, page 1, April 12, 1988, series 11, box 1, folder 14: Media Relations (History), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁸⁴ Government Affairs Goals and Status Matrix prepared by David S. J. Brown, page 1, April 12, 1988, series 11, box 1, folder 14: Media Relations (History), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 1.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 1.

hoped to expand their advocacy reach via the political process and use its resources to “exert maximum influence on key business issues.”¹⁸⁷ A major priority of government affairs was coordinating a united effort across all the business units within Monsanto regarding biotechnology, similar to the Government Regulations and Business Relations Task Force created in the early 1980s.¹⁸⁸ In regards to state government relations, Monsanto hoped to shape legislative and regulatory bodies that affected corporate goals through “monitoring and lobbying resources in key states.”¹⁸⁹ Ultimately, 1988 represented a step towards a more robust public relations and government relations program to influence key stakeholders and policymakers in the government and public, fitting in to the larger strategy to increase corporate influence.

1989 Government Relations

In February 1989, the Industrial Biotechnology Association (IBA) reached out to industry leaders, Monsanto being one of the most influential companies, to develop a Biotechnology Bill in the US Congress.¹⁹⁰ Before reaching out to industry leaders, the IBA had already included many bill points such as increased FDA funding for more employees, increased number of biotechnology patent examiners in the Patent and Trademark Office, a research and development tax credit, and amendments to the Drug Export Act.¹⁹¹ All of the points aimed to speed up the approval process for corporate products. Monsanto advocated for four additional bill points such as increased patents on seeds and plants; import and domestic products regulation standardization; clarification of which regulations and agencies biotechnologies fell under for

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 2.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 3.

¹⁸⁹ Public Affairs Goals and Status Matrix prepared by T.J. Slocum, page 2, March 1988, series 11, box 1, folder 14: Media Relations (History), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁹⁰ Letter from Dick Godown on IBA Biotechnology Bill for the 101st Congress, page 1, February 28, 1989, series 1, box 2A, folder 4: Biotechnology (Biotechnology Steering Committee), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 1.

commercialization; and an overall commitment by the US to maintain competitive commercial leaderships within the biotechnology industry.¹⁹² The recommended points echoed the same themes seen throughout the 1980s to advocate for a closer relationship with corporations and government to benefit corporate strategic initiatives.

Monsanto met legislative resistance from governmental bodies in 1989. An internal memo from the H&K agency to Monsanto executives revealed several concerns surrounding biotechnology in Washington, DC. At an AgBIOTECH conference, Kathleen Merrigan, a Senate Agriculture Committee staffer, indicated that the 1990 Farm Bill “would prohibit federal funds to be used for herbicide-tolerant plant research.”¹⁹³ The bill was a concern for Monsanto because though the company did not rely on federal funding, it sent a clear message against ag-biotech companies like Monsanto, that were conducting biotechnology research.¹⁹⁴ Additionally, a meeting with US Senator Al Gore’s staff revealed his opposition to herbicide-tolerant crop research, which was problematic due to testing in his state.¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, Jack Doyle, of the Environmental Policy Institute, questioned the safety of herbicide-tolerant crops and herbicides like Roundup.¹⁹⁶ These concerns were met with Monsanto government relations strategies to influence key stakeholders and create an public environment positive to biotechnology research and commercialization.

Thus, it is clear that the Monsanto Company completed a strategic effort spanning across company business units focusing governmental and regularly body influence, shaping public opinion through media plans, and interacting and gaining support in scientific communities to

¹⁹² Letter from Paul Johan on IBA Biotechnology Bill for the 101st Congress, page 1, March 10, 1989, series 1, box 2A, folder 4: Biotechnology (Biotechnology Steering Committee), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁹³ Memorandum from Denise Clarke (H&K) to Len Guarraia and Gary Barton, page 1, March 31, 1989, series 1, box 2A, folder 4: Biotechnology (Biotechnology Steering Committee), Monsanto Company Records.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 1.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 1.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 1.

pursue support for an aggressive biotechnology commercialization plan. Through numerous internal documents, budget plans, letters, and policy documents from the 1980s it is clear that Monsanto intended to influence governmental and regulatory bodies in the industry and towards the company's favor. Monsanto blurred the line between the regulators and regulated through the biotechnology developments of the 1980s. The internal documents revealed a deep-rooted history of the unethical business practice concerns raised in the 21st century cases. Additionally, the analysis depicted the foundations of the company's flawed business strategy that proved to be a major liability.

After a comprehensive dive into the 1980s biotechnology policy documents, an analysis of the systematic approach to education and university influence by the Monsanto Company was necessary to fully grasp the scope of influence. Utilizing the contemporary Monsanto legal battles as a case study, with the context of governmental influence and media relations public opinion manipulation, an analysis of the efforts to shape business education systems by the Monsanto Company revealed the responsibility of the educational institutions and evident corporate reliance and influence.

Monsanto and University Relationships

In 1987, Howard Schneidierman, the Senior Vice President of Research and Development (R&D) at the Monsanto Company, delivered a speech to a Conference Board on R&D and shared his views of university-corporate relations.¹⁹⁷ Schneidierman stated that "one way to greatly enhance industrial competitiveness is to couple the talents of America's research-

¹⁹⁷ Remarks by Howard A. Schneidierman on Research Universities as Research partners: How to Make It Work, individual binder, March 3, 1987, series 1, box 2: A Compilation of Speeches and Remarks by Senior Management, Monsanto Company Records.

driven industries with those of America's universities."¹⁹⁸ Schneidierman explained that Monsanto "spends between \$15 and \$20 million per year on university research collaboration," equating to "three percent of our [Monsanto] total R&D budget."¹⁹⁹ Additionally, he explained that there is an increasingly blurred line between basic and applied research, with product lines shrinking that made the need for accelerated research through partnerships even more significant.²⁰⁰

Schneidierman warned that the relationship must be a partnership, not one in which the "university views the company as a source of funds."²⁰¹ In that vein, he stated that "universities are not corporate subsidiaries."²⁰² Schneidierman was a former dean, and stated the "no one tells a professor in an American university what to do," so concerns regarding academic freedom are unfounded.²⁰³ He described the benefits of using a consultant professor position to "accelerate the application and exploitation and knowledge base created by our universities."²⁰⁴

Schneidierman described an ideal relationship between Monsanto and educational institutions for Monsanto, where the corporation reaps the benefits of applied industry research through the commercialization of scientific products. Additionally, Schneidierman made it clear that company reliance and partnerships with educational institutions is critical for the future of both his R&D department and the company at large. The efforts to partner with educational institutions for Monsanto's benefit were detailed in the 1980s reports, but the efforts are rooted even further back in the company's history.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 1.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 1.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 1.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 5.

²⁰² Ibid., 6.

²⁰³ Ibid., 8.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 9.

The talks surrounding university relations go back twenty years earlier, to a host of discussions and speeches given at a Monsanto conference in 1965. At the conference Dr. William Davidson, a Professor of Business Organization at The Ohio State University's Graduate Business School, delivered a speech.²⁰⁵ Davidson was a director of the Executive Development Program at The Ohio State University from 1955-1958 and served as a consultant of management education and marketing management at various firms.²⁰⁶ Davidson communicated that there was an increased demand for "a combination of scientific or technical background and business knowledge," specifically among MBAs with scientific backgrounds.²⁰⁷ Davidson stated that the critical areas of expertise needed for technical people in the industry are marketing, management, and finance/accounting.²⁰⁸ Davidson's speech highlights the necessity for scientist working at corporations like Monsanto to understand basic aspects of business. Davidson's speech made it very clear that those individuals trained at business schools would be more valuable to a corporation, placing a great responsibility on business instruction on the educational institutions, as opposed to in-house company training and education.

At the same Monsanto conference, there was a roundtable discussion from university professors and industry leaders on how to have more cooperation between the two groups. The discussion consisted of four different groups led by Monsanto leaders of various functions spanning from Assistant to the Vice President and a Marketing Personnel Planning Manager. A wide range of engineering and business universities were represented, including Vanderbilt University, Clemson University, University of Pennsylvania, Michigan State University, and

²⁰⁵ Speech by Dr. William R. Davidson on The Increasing Need for an Awareness of the Business Function by the Graduate Going Into Industry, individual booklet, June 30, 1965, series 11, box 2, folder 5: Selected Talks from the Seminar on Business Opportunities for the Chemist and Chemical Engineer Graduate, Monsanto Company Records.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 61.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 61.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 62.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology.²⁰⁹ In the working session, the main topic of conversation included increased industry funding support, more industrial experience for faculty, and increased consulting projects with industry.²¹⁰ There was consensus amongst the group that the Recruiting and College Relations programs should be kept separate.²¹¹

In the discussion Shell, DuPont, and Dow were mentioned multiple times in comparison to Monsanto university relations, and an effort to have more industry-based lecturers was needed.²¹² The consensus on college campuses of the industry was the “image of engineering on the engineering campus was good.”²¹³ However, on liberal arts campuses, it is more necessary to show how businesses are a public servant and how their roles can help humanity as a whole.²¹⁴ There was consensus that efforts to increase science and technology enrollment at universities was rooted in lackluster secondary school guidance an education.²¹⁵ Several Monsanto initiatives, such as engaging seniors in high school and some national chapters, were mentioned as good initial programs, but further development would be needed.²¹⁶ The roundtable discussion depicted how both groups called for increased cooperation and mutual benefits. However, Monsanto motives and reliance on educational institutions to instruct future employees and close relations with university professors across the country was clearly evident.

²⁰⁹ List of Professor Attendees, page 2-3, June 29-30, 1965, series 11, box 2, folder 5: individual booklet: Selected Talks from the Seminar on Business Opportunities for the Chemist and Chemical Engineer Graduate, Monsanto Company Records.

²¹⁰ Round Table Discussion on How Can College and Industry Cooperate to Obtain Better Mutual Understanding, page 74-75, June 30, 1965, series 11, box 2, folder 5: individual booklet: Selected Talks from the Seminar on Business Opportunities for the Chemist and Chemical Engineer Graduate, Monsanto Company Records.

²¹¹ Ibid., 76.

²¹² Ibid., 77.

²¹³ Ibid., 78.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 78.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 80.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 81.

In addition to the conferences supported by Monsanto to encourage industry and university partnerships, Monsanto engaged in other activities to encourage relationships. One of which was through steadily increasing financial awards to American universities and colleges. In 1952, the company distributed “13 graduate fellowships, one graduate scholarship, and seven grants-in-aid to various schools.”²¹⁷ Monsanto distributed financial awards to 58 American universities totaling over \$275,000 in 1953.²¹⁸ In 1954, Monsanto gave out 57 distinct awards to 44 American colleges and universities.²¹⁹ In 1955, Monsanto distributed financial awards to 53 American universities and 72 distinct aid awards including University of Pittsburgh, The Ohio State University, and University of Wisconsin.²²⁰

In 1956, the Monsanto Vice President for Research, Development, and Engineering announced financial aid to 83 American universities in the form of fellowships, undergraduate scholarships, and cash grants.²²¹ The Ohio State University received a fellowship along with Brown and Yale Universities.²²² University of Michigan and Cornell University received undergraduate scholarships, along with numerous other institutions.²²³ Monsanto distributed grants to various university departments from Illinois University to St. Louis University as a part of the Aid-to-Education Program in 1956.²²⁴ In addition to financial aid, in 1964 12 chemistry and engineering professors from various leading scientific universities such as The Ohio State

²¹⁷ Financial Aid News Release, page 1, September 10, 1952, series 11, box 2, folder 5: Education Outreach (University Level [General]), Monsanto Company Records.

²¹⁸ Financial Aid News Release, page 1, 1953, series 11, box 2, folder 5: Education Outreach (University Level [General]), Monsanto Company Records.

²¹⁹ Financial Aid News Release, page 1, 1954, series 11, box 2, folder 5: Education Outreach (University Level [General]), Monsanto Company Records.

²²⁰ Financial Aid News Release, page 1-2, 1955, series 11, box 2, folder 5: Education Outreach (University Level [General]), Monsanto Company Records.

²²¹ Financial Aid News Release, page 1, 1956, series 11, box 2, folder 5: Education Outreach (University Level [General]), Monsanto Company Records.

²²² Ibid., 2.

²²³ Ibid., 2.

²²⁴ Aid-To-Education News Release, page 1, 1956, series 11, box 2, folder 5: Education Outreach (University Level [General]), Monsanto Company Records.

University, University of Minnesota, and Brown University, visited the Monsanto research facilities and participated in a discussion surrounding new methods to encourage students to engage in technical disciplines.²²⁵ Monsanto clearly used the grants and funding as a way to cultivate closer relationships with universities and fund institutions that provided education to target future employees.

Even before the comprehensive 1980s corporate public affairs plans, Monsanto's reliance and influence on educational institutions is evident through grants, conference speeches, and executive strategies. From the historical analysis, it is evident that Monsanto viewed universities as both a tool to educate and recruit future employees, as well as a powerful scientific resource for collaboration. Monsanto relationships in the form of scholarships and fellowships to universities ultimately benefited the company in the long-term through employees and closer relationships with cutting edge scientists. Given the influence, support, and reliance on educational institutions as the main form of educational instruction at Monsanto, future research will need to analyze the faculty, curriculums, and classes taught at undergraduate institutions to ensure business school graduates are instructed on how to ethically interact with corporations, governmental and regulatory bodies, scientific communities, and the public.

²²⁵ Professor Visit News Release, page 1, 1964, series 11, box 2, folder 5: Education Outreach (University Level [General]), Monsanto Company Records.

CHAPTER FOUR: Discussion and Conclusions

Conclusion

Edwin Hardeman frequently used Roundup on his Gualala, California, home and his 56-acre property in Santa Rosa. For close to three decades Hardeman used the herbicide as a tool to fight poison oak on his properties. On Christmas Day 2014, he discovered a swollen lymph node on his neck and later, a diagnosis of stage three non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Hardeman underwent six painful rounds of chemotherapy to fight the disease. Then in 2015, he saw a news report, describing how Roundup could lead to his exact form of cancer. Hardeman quickly filed a federal lawsuit against Monsanto in February 2016.²²⁶

The court selected Hardeman as the first federal, and second overall, trial among hundreds of other cancer survivors and families to influence future litigation and impact many other settlements. Throughout the trial, the prosecutors argued that Hardeman's exposure to Roundup caused his non-Hodgkin lymphoma and that Monsanto had knowledge of its dangerous effects. Through presented evidence and arguments, the jury was convinced that "Monsanto was negligent by not using reasonable care to warn about Roundup."²²⁷

The jury's unanimous ruling supported Hardeman's lawyer's opening statement asking "How did Monsanto influence the science over the last 40 years?" and arguing that "Monsanto has influenced and manipulated the science through its relationships with regulatory officials and through ghostwriting."²²⁸ Within five minutes of the verdict, Bayer AG announced that it would

²²⁶ Sam Levin, "The family that took on Monsanto: 'They should've been with us in the chemo ward'," *The Guardian*. April 10, 2019. Accessed December 10, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/apr/10/edwin-hardeman-monsanto-trial-interview>.

²²⁷ "Hardeman Jury Verdict Form Phase 2," Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.baumhedlundlaw.com/pdf/monsanto-documents/Hardeman/Hardeman-Jury-Verdict-Form-Phase-2.pdf>

²²⁸ "Trail Transcript March 20, 2019," U.S. Right to Know, last modified March 24, 2020, <https://usrtk.org/monsanto-papers/federal-court/>, 22-23.

appeal the decision. In response, Hardeman's attorneys' concluded that "It is clear from Monsanto's actions that it does not care whether Roundup causes cancer, focusing instead on manipulating public opinion and undermining anyone who raises genuine and legitimate concerns about Roundup."²²⁹ The company immediately faced a share price drop and backlash from investors as financial ramifications to the court's decision.²³⁰

Thousands of cases are still ongoing against Monsanto from people with similar cancer battles. The research required a step back from the court cases and current literature surrounding Monsanto to analyze the company's government relations. It is evident that the unethical business practices found in the Monsanto Roundup trial released documents, such as ghost-writing and unethical regulatory body influence, are a part of a larger corporate strategy of government relations and influence at the Monsanto Company. From its beginnings in corporate public affairs to the evolution of perfectly calculated government relations plans targeted at government officials, regulatory bodies, scientific communities, and public opinion throughout the 1980s, it is unmistakable that the issues are historically rooted in the company and its culture. Additionally, it is evident that Monsanto influenced, relied on, and created an unhealthy partnership with educational institutions. Monsanto officials engaged in unethical business practices, historically and into the present day, designed by the company as a way to expedite regulatory bodies in favor of speeding up commercialization for biotechnology products, such as Roundup.

The unethical business practices found in the Monsanto Roundup trial are part of a larger strategy of government relations manipulation and influence at the Monsanto Company.

²²⁹ "Verdict Is In – Monsanto Must Pay Cancer Victim \$80 Million," U.S. Right to Know, last modified March 24, 2020, <https://usrtk.org/monsanto-roundup-trial-tacker/verdict-is-in-monsanto-must-pay-cancer-victim-80-million/>.

²³⁰ Levin, "The family..."

However, the strategy of corporate influence proved to be a liability for Monsanto. In both Johnson's and Hardeman's trials the breakdown between objective science and regulatory bodies with Monsanto contributed to the jury's decision in favor of the plaintiffs. Ironically, in the end Monsanto needed unbiased scientific facts to counter claims. Nevertheless, decades of corporate public affairs influence and unethical business practices lost the company the impartial verification it needed and revealed the flawed corporate strategy.

It is incredibly imperative for Monsanto, other businesses, and educational institutions to understand the historical context and decades of unethical behavior that contributed to the contemporary legal battles. The Monsanto employees engaged in unethical business practices for decades and it is the responsibility of business schools and other educational institutions to train future business leaders and employees in ethical business practices and governmental relations, when company efforts are absent. The utilization of the Monsanto trials as a learning case and example for other corporations, the incorporation of ethical government relations into the undergraduate business curriculum, and the teaching of history across disciplines as a vital case study tool are several key recommendations to ensure that similar unethical practices and corporate influence do not continue. The historical findings and contemporary analysis are imperative to grasp so that corporations adapt to protect consumers and prevent similar cases in the future.

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